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MACHIAVELLI'S PRINCE.

I.

ONLY Judas Iscariot has been more detested than Machiavelli, whom our early dramatists used to introduce as a villain into their plays. His name was used as a scare to children and as a synonym for Satan. Among his contemporaries were many men whose wickedness and cunning he commented upon, earning more odium for daring to write than they earned for daring to do. The cruel and crafty Spanish king, Ferdinand, holds a high place in the history of Spain; Leo the Tenth, a sensualist and a trickster, is popularly regarded as the model patron of a Golden Age; even the Borgian pope, Alexander VI., the most abominable of recorded rulers, has had no such persistent vituperation levelled at him as that which, for three centuries and a half, has blackened the memory of the Florentine secretary. His works were among the earliest pilloried in the *Index*, but, though forbidden, they were read by succeeding generations of theologists and politicians, and splashed with fresh abuse. To deny that they agreed with Machiavelli has been the common practice of the best men and the worst.

Nevertheless, we infer that the opinions of a thinker so vilified must be worthy of attention, if for no other reason than that they have not been overwhelmed by this great burden of abuse. The world does not go on throwing stones at mere phantoms; Machiavelli is still to be reckoned with. Surely the time has come for reckoning with him soberly and dispassionately. If he uttered truths, or only half-truths, we shall profit by knowing them; if he put forth fallacies, we shall be able to disprove them, and so be happily rid of them and him forever. For either purpose, it is indispensable that we understand exactly what he meant. Disregarding the popular conception of him, sweeping aside the cloud of odium,

we must approach him fairly and with no partisan intent; and this not so much on his account as our own; for though it is our duty towards the dead to see that their memory be not calumniated, much more is it our duty and our need to know the truth for ourselves,—unless, indeed, we are afraid of the truth.

Fortunately we can at last do justice to Machiavelli by simply employing in our examination of him those methods by which modern history and criticism are patiently excavating the past and letting it tell its own story, as the buildings and paintings of uncovered Pompeii tell their own story. Of great aid in this endeavor is Mr. Burd's recently published edition of "*Il Principe*,"* that work of Machiavelli's, a knowledge (and more often an ignorance) of which has been the text of anti-Machiavellian polemics. On its face "*The Prince*" is a treatise designed to teach a ruler the art of government. It is wholly practical. Machiavelli does not pretend to discuss right and wrong from the stand-point of the moralist; he simply states that a certain line of action succeeds and a different one fails. To succeed is the ruler's whole business, because if he fails he ceases to be himself; a king without a kingdom is like a body without life. Looking out upon the political conditions of his time, and surveying the history of the past, Machiavelli's keen, undazed eyes discerned certain grim laws controlling the rise and fall of monarchs and States. That those laws are moral, in the sense that virtue is outwardly rewarded and wickedness punished by them, he saw no evidence. A State preserves its independence by being strong in brute strength: if weak, it will inevitably become the prey of a stronger neighbor. Superior refinement, a larger respect for justice, wiser laws, not these, nor any of the other attributes of civilization, avail against an enemy who, though inferior in all these, has power on his side. *Be strong* is therefore the first and last commandment for nations and princes to observe; and Machiavelli instructs them how to use their strength. He

* "*Il Principe*," by Niccolò Machiavelli. Edited by L. Arthur Burd, with an Introduction by Lord Acton. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891.

tells a prince that it is safer for him to be feared than loved; that he must not stick at any cruelty, provided it be necessary for the preservation of his State; to lie and dissimulate; to make a pretence of religion; to exterminate without compunction those rivals or rebels who will not submit; to indulge the masses with splendid shows; to play off the people against the grandees and so to weaken both,—these are among the precepts of Machiavellianism that most shocked the world; but instead of inquiring whether they were justified by experience or not, the world, after its usual fashion, set up a mad chorus of denunciation and assumed that it was guarding the Tables of the Moral Law from a ruthless and impious iconoclast bent on destroying them.

But to huzza for the Ten Commandments did not touch Machiavelli's case at all, because he had not assailed them. What he had done was to describe things not as they ought to be but as they were in his time, and to deduce the laws which actually controlled the public deeds of rulers. He supported every maxim by concrete examples, showing, for instance, how bribery was an instrument successfully used by Alexander VI. in obtaining the papal throne, and how reliance upon popular good-will wrecked the virtuous Soderini. Be-rate him as much as you like with proclaiming an immoral code, his answer is, "I but register facts, for which I am no-wise responsible; show me that unselfishness and righteousness have been the first considerations of princes and I will gladly make correction. The princes I cite rose to power in the evil ways I have described; therefore I conclude that he who would emulate them must imitate them—that these methods inhere in the universal order."

In thus resolving to study man only on the political side, Machiavelli has been compared to the modern political economists who observe men wholly as commercial creatures, governed by the laws of supply and demand. We might further compare him to the physician who watches the action of diseases, and calmly writes a description of them, but without feeling called upon to express his abhorrence of disease, nor even to suggest remedies. Machiavelli differed from his prede-

cessors in state craft in that he confined himself to observation and experience; by adopting the inductive method he broke away from the barren circle of abstraction in which the mediæval mind had vainly plodded.

But what purpose had he in giving to the world a work of this quality? Granting that his facts are correct and his conclusions sound, why publish them in such a fashion that they may teach other Borgias and Medicis how to become successful tyrants? To this question one class of Machiavelli's opponents deemed it sufficient to assert that he was a wicked man, who took a malicious pleasure in propagating wicked doctrines, while others insinuated that he wrote what he thought would please the particular Medici to whom he dedicated "The Prince" in order to secure favors and an appointment for himself. His apologists, lacking courage to make a bold defence, resorted to artifice. They hinted that "The Prince" had a hidden meaning which Machiavelli had not dared or cared to announce. A stanch republican at heart, he had written this book to expose tyrants and their iniquities so that republicans, being cognizant of their oppressor's wiles, could guard against them. Others, again, said that Machiavelli hoped Lorenzo de Medici would follow the fatal instructions given to him under the guise of ingenuousness, and so plunge all the more quickly headlong into ruin. I need not examine these various theories, which have provoked endless clatter among controversialists, because I believe none of them to be the true one. In this case, as in so many others, the straightest path is probably the path of truth. Machiavelli wrote in good faith. He saw Italy the prey of foreigners: the French, the Germans, and the Spaniards fought over her spoils; her provinces were overrun by mercenaries and robber barons; her cities were torn by the quarrels of fierce nobles or implacable factions. Before she could hope for peace or security two things were necessary: she must be united, and she must be free. But unity was of more immediate importance than freedom; for as long as the foreign "barbarians" remained, the evils under which she groaned could not possibly be cured. But to drive out the

barbarians the Italians must rise and act in harmony, and this they could do only when they had a leader strong enough to command them. It was inevitable that such a leader would be a tyrant, since a tyranny was the form of government natural to that age; no matter,—better for the present one tyrant than twenty; and after he should succeed in ousting the foreigner and in building up a national State, it would be time to think of discrowning him and of establishing a freer government. He must prove his fitness by overcoming his rivals; therefore, he must needs know the methods that they would employ against him, and the rules by which according to the sure witness of history, a prince may conquer and command. These methods Machiavelli unfolds in his book, these rules he sets down as dispassionately as the chemist states his formulas, in order that the prince, the liberator whom he dreams of, may be adequately equipped. To fight fire with fire, to surpass in cunning antagonists who are masters of cunning, to use the weapons at hand instead of waiting for better weapons to be invented,—these were the lessons Machiavelli inculcated. And as at the moment he completed his treatise Lorenzo de Medici was the prince who seemed best qualified by fortune and talents to achieve the great enterprise, to him the work was dedicated. Doubtless Machiavelli hoped that it would bring himself employment, but it is idle to suppose that that hope was the original or even the chief object for which he wrote.

This explanation, I believe, represents more nearly Machiavelli's purpose in "The Prince" than does any of the other theories which his enemies and his apologists have set up. Unless it be the true one, the last chapter of "The Prince" is superfluous and meaningless, and the omission to discuss republics is inexplicable. That he deemed his scheme feasible, there is good reason to affirm. A man who had witnessed such vicissitudes and changes as he witnessed during the twenty years previous to 1513—the year when he wrote "The Prince"—might well imagine that the change he most desired—the expulsion of the foreigners—lay within the radius of possibility. The very nearness to success of Cæsar

Borgia's attempt to make himself lord of Central Italy—"I had prepared against every accident but one, my own ill-health, and that has ruined me," is the substance of his explanation of his failure—fortified Machiavelli's belief that the task could be accomplished. To educate the prince who should undertake it was accordingly his purpose.

And here I might leave him and his terrific manual were I only concerned in clearing up misapprehensions of immemorial standing; but I have a far deeper concern than the mere rectification of an historical verdict or the rescinding of a bill of attainder unjustly passed upon a man dead three hundred and sixty years ago. The question, Why was "The Prince" written? would have chiefly an antiquarian interest to us were it not involved in the far more important question, Is "The Prince" true? A shocked world has protested generation after generation that Machiavelli's doctrines are false and diabolical, and yet, despite shouts and protests, these doctrines loom up generation after generation to challenge the world's pleasant optimism. Their vitality argues that they cannot, like the Indian devils, be exorcised by a loud beating of tom-toms. Fallacies, we know, are hard to kill, and lies travel far; but why should men keep on assailing Machiavellianism, if, as they assert, it was long ago proved untrue? Why not let it moulder in oblivion along with Ptolemaism, belief in witchcraft, and all other exploded systems, which no man of sense thinks of refuting? Why, but for the reason that the truth in it keeps it alive and endows it with as much interest for us to-day as it ever had for men in the past?

How much, then, and what parts of it are true? Did the rules of action which, Machiavelli declares, characterized the princes and States of his time prevail before his time? Have they subsequently been replaced by other rules, and, if so, when were they replaced?

No one competent to speak will deny that Machiavelli has dissected with a surgeon's skill the political morals and practices of his own age, not only in Italy, but in all Europe. So far as I can discern, there was not then a ruler nor a State that was not guided by selfishness; not one that recognized the

existence of a moral law, or of any law save that of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement. That might makes right, was the common creed. Brute force and unscrupulous cunning—the Lion and the Fox, as Machiavelli personified them—were masters of the world; and any one whose destiny it was to live at that time might well be forgiven if he failed to detect any honorable motives influencing the rulers of his own and other lands.

But that era was not exceptional in its disregard of right; it was very wicked and very cruel, and therefore its abandonment to selfishness resulted in unusually monstrous deeds, but the principle to which it bowed was not new. Go back through history, and you will see that principle everywhere dominant. The Hohenstaufens, and after them the Hapsburgs, prevailed in Germany not because they were juster or more righteous than their rivals, but because they were stronger and craftier. By the same means the descendants of Hugh Capet gradually made vassals of the great feudatories of France. In Saxon England the House of Wessex took the lead because it had the power. Charlemagne's empire was founded by the sword, and when the hand which held the sword grew weak the empire fell asunder. Go back still farther: follow the expansion of the Roman State; see how the sturdy men of the Tiber encroached first on their Latin neighbors and then spread, victorious, over all the antique world. Did they subjugate Sabines and Etruscans, Greeks and Gauls, for any other reason than that they were stronger? We are not concerned to examine whether the triumph of force was not often beneficial, but merely to determine whether any other principle than it dominated the affairs of States in ancient times. Force may be the instrument of a highly-civilized or of a savage race; in either case, it respects no other agents. Sometimes it is in the hands of a polytheistic Assyrian, who therewith makes captive monotheistic Jews; sometime a barbaric Brennus wields it to crush more civilized Romans; sometimes a Trajan or a Hadrian uses it to defend civilization against the assaults of barbarians. Evidently we cannot assert that force was always on the side of the more enlight-

ened or the more righteous: it created the civilization of ancient Rome, and it swept that civilization away.

So far, then, as history up to the sixteenth century shows, Machiavelli gives a faithful statement of the means by which nations were won and ruled and lost; not, indeed, that he furnishes a complete explanation of all cases, but that, so far as he goes, he is correct. What we call Machiavellianism was a constant influence up to and including his own age; has it been superseded by other influences since then? I hardly think that any one conversant with the history of the past three centuries and a half will be bold enough to say that it has. Great as have been the territorial changes in Europe—not to mention other continents—during this period, and radical as has been the revolution in the theory of internal government, the attitude of States towards each other has remained Machiavellian.

To confirm this statement I need only refer briefly to the chief events and the dominant men of the past hundred years. The vast forces let loose at the French Revolution were caught up and controlled by Napoleon, who converted them into an engine for achieving his magnificent but unscrupulous designs. His motto was, "God fights on the side of the heavy battalions," and he remodelled half of Europe regardless of every consideration except his interest. When he fell, Metternich became the shaper of European politics,—Metternich, a Machiavellian of the vulpine rather than of the leonine species. In reading the famous eighteenth chapter of "*The Prince*," do you not feel that Machiavelli must have had the Austrian chancellor in mind when he wrote it? "The successful ruler," he says, "must seem all piety, all good faith, all humanity, all integrity, all religion. And there is nothing which it is more necessary to seem to have than this last quality; because men in the mass judge more by the eyes than by the hands, because it belongs to every one to see, but to few to touch. . . . Therefore let a prince take care to conquer and maintain the State; the means will always be judged honorable, and be praised by every one; because the multitude is always taken by what appears, and by the result of an

event." How many of the pious protestations and moral reflections in Metternich's despatches were evidently inspired by this purpose! And how little his acts corresponded to them! After Metternich came Louis Napoleon, whose career began with the *coup d'état*, and who held France in check for twenty years by the simple Machiavellian device of amusing the masses with pomp and parades, and by tickling their vain-glory. And then Bismarck, who had real force on his side, pricked Napoleon's bubble of sham, and with Bismarck another leonine Machiavellian rose to arbitrate for Europe.

Let me again point out that it is not here a question as to whether Europe has been benefited by the creation of a United Germany in the place of many petty German States; we are simply trying to discover whether the creation of the German Empire was due to any other agent than superior force. Prussia robbed Denmark of her provinces, whipped Austria, coerced Hanover, and crushed Napoleon, because she was stronger than they; the question of justice is not even debatable. According to any theory of justice which obtains among civilized individuals, it is as monstrous that a large State should domineer over a small State as that a man six feet tall should enslave his neighbor of only five feet. But this is the fact, an illustration of the doctrine that among nations might makes right. There is to-day no small State in Europe which owes its independence to the general recognition that it has a right to an independent existence; but solely to the antagonistic greed of the Great Powers, none of which will permit a rival to seize the spoil which many covet. But the conversion of Europe into a permanent camp is, of course, the most evident proof that the practices which Machiavelli formulated still survive, and survive with unabated vigor, in the conduct of the great States of the world.

The theory that the State can do no wrong, that its one concern is self-preservation, that success justifies itself, that might makes right; the idea, in other words, that while the individual is subject to ethical and moral laws, the State, being impersonal, is responsible to no laws, since it is its own law-maker, was never more prevalent than at the present time.

Whatever may be their professions, governments show by their practice that such motives as these—and these are all Machiavellian motives—determine their policy. Men of science tell us that in the great struggle for existence in the animal world “the fittest survive;” we cannot truly assert that in the competition of human life the same happy result is reached. Animal strength, though a necessary element, is by no means the highest element in the constitution of civilized man. Indeed, as we rise in the scale of civilization, excellence among individuals is measured less and less by physical qualities: which is “fitter to survive,”—your invalid Darwin, your frail Emerson, or your robust prize-fighter?

But it seems that among nations brute force has hitherto been the one indispensable equipment; in the long run the battle has always been to the strong, whether he were Miltiades or Tamerlane, Charles V. or Von Moltke. The justice of the cause has had nothing to do with the result. We fall into the comfortable habit of thinking that, on the whole, the best survives,—an assumption as unwarranted as it would be to pretend that all octogenarians are better than younger men whom they have outlived.

If it be established, therefore, that history has but one commandment for rulers and States,—namely, *Be strong, or perish*, it follows that they are justified in any method of self-preservation they may adopt. From the logic of events there is no appeal. “The apology of an age,” says Cousin, “is in its existence, for its existence is a decree and a judgment of God himself, or history is but a meaningless phantasmagoria.” From this sentence of the modern philosopher we might deduce all the most startling corollaries of Machiavellianism. Machiavelli's work has contemporary importance, because in it he has formulated from the practices of rulers the laws which actually guide them. He dared to tell what the world does, leaving it to the moralist to say whether it does well or ill; and the world, instead of mending its ways, persecuted him for his frankness. For one of the crimes which society never forgives is the exposure of matters which, though known to every one, society agrees shall not be spoken of. But until

this evil system of politics shall be outgrown, until the code by which States regulate their mutual relations shall be at least as just as that which civilized individuals respect, Machiavelli's "Prince" cannot lose its interest or its significance, and by none ought it to be pondered more deeply than by those who have most faith in the perfectibility of mankind.

II.

I have stated Machiavelli's doctrines as strongly as possible, because I believe that we cannot hope to find a cure until we know the nature and extent of a disease ; but of course the world has made some progress, at least on the surface, since Machiavelli's time. Cruelty, for instance, is now the exception rather than the rule in the treatment of subjects by their governors, and in the dealings of State with State. Even in war, certain customs have been adopted by civilized combatants in the hope of mitigating the inevitable horrors of warfare. A conquered people is no longer given up to slaughter, nor its property to destruction, if the victor sees more profit to himself in sparing lives and dwellings, and in exacting an indemnity. Thus self-interest, if not humanity, tends towards a better condition. In the settlement of minor disputes, international law is generally appealed to, and we hear much talk about submitting the gravest quarrels to international arbitration. But the vital fact remains, that there is no authority which can compel any disputant to accept such arbitration, or can prevent him from resorting, if he choose, to violence.

And this marks the difference between an individual and a State : the former is amenable to laws framed by public opinion, and if they do not suit him his only recourse is to emigrate ; but the State is its own judge, and it owes no obedience to any of its neighbors. The individual is responsible, a moral agent, towards the State ; whereas the State is irresponsible, unmoral, and, like corporations, it has no soul. If Germany, for example, despoils Denmark of a province, and the other Powers will not interfere, who shall call her to account ? A nation never yet passed a vote of censure on itself, nor can I foresee that it ever will. But its iniquities are punished by a Nemesis

which operates none the less surely because its steps are hidden and often slow. It would be easy to show the process of ethical retribution throughout history,—how successes won unrighteously never in the end profited the winner, and how, if punishment comes in no other way, it consists in having a character which delights in iniquity. What if Rodrigo Borgia did succeed in making himself pope? To be the bestial villain that Borgia was would be the greatest punishment which could be inflicted on any decent man. We must revise our standards of success, whether for nations or for individuals: we must teach them that success or failure depends on what we *are*, not on what we *have*. In no other way can I discover any basis for morals or justice in the universal scheme. Rascals and robbers and frauds *do* secure the external badges of success; the virtuous man is not necessarily rich, or honored, or understood; Christ was crucified while living, his memory has been crucified for eighteen hundred years by its being possible that a Borgia should be called his vicar; lives as precious as Lincoln's life have always been at the mercy of assassins. Yet the majesty of righteousness remains untarnished and invulnerable; vice cannot do the work of virtue any more than folly can speak for wisdom. The prizes which fall to wrong are temporal and deciduous; it is character and not possessions which determines real success. These are venerable truths, but the many are still sceptical of them; the many still envy millionaires and titles, and still idolize success however achieved.

Machiavelli, it is clear, had only this external success in view when he wrote his manual for princes. The question of right or wrong concerned him no more than it concerned Shakespeare in drawing *Iago*; he was bent on making a perfect portrait of a great type, and he succeeded. His *Prince* is the concrete embodiment of the evil side of the nature of a State, just as Goethe's *Mephistopheles* is the concrete embodiment of the evil side of individual human nature. Where is the perfect man? Where is the heart that has never felt envy or hatred or wrath; the tongue that has never spoken guile or malice? But the State is merely the aggregate of one or more

score millions of individuals, each of whom is in some measure imperfect : how idle is it, therefore, to hope to construct a perfect whole out of imperfect parts ! Rather should we be astonished, I think, that multitudes so faulty can be organized into any sort of political cohesion, and that, though there has never been a government that satisfied its best citizens, there have been many governments which have been better than the standard of the majority.

Machiavellianism in States can be cured by the same processes by which Mephistophelianism in individuals can be cured ; that is, by putting morals into practice, by obeying ethical laws. It is time to abolish the old falsehood that there is one standard of right for the single citizen and another for all the citizens collectively. If it is wrong for one to lie and steal and kill, it is wrong for a million to lie and steal and kill ; yet a Cabinet of humane and respectable men, acting for the million and representing the impersonal State, have no compunctions against voting for a policy which not one of them would apply to his private conduct. They declare war, for instance, in the name of the State, but if any of them had a quarrel with his neighbor he would not deign to settle it by brute force. The impersonality of all corporations, and of the State, which is the largest corporation of all, increases the irresponsibility of individual members, and therefore opens the door for corruption. Everybody's business is nobody's business ; the single citizen, unless he be endowed with rare moral sensitiveness, does not feel very keenly shame or remorse for the misdeeds of his government ; at the most he is only one in ten millions who ought to bear the blame. By one of the strangest of metamorphoses every vote goes into the ballot-box as the expression of the views of a particular man, but all the votes come out as the expression of an abstraction, a political party. Of old it was the king, now it is the party that can do no wrong, and out of loyalty to it good but deluded men vote for wicked candidates and dishonest measures, just as they once blindly supported any iniquity their king might indulge in. Under cover of the impersonality of party the Machiavellian politician wins his tricks to-day.

Charlatans and adventurers and demagogues would have no occupation were the majority of citizens both honest and enlightened. It was by rewarding the corrupt few and deceiving the ignorant many that Louis Napoleon, for instance, controlled France for twenty years. But how could quacks thrive if the average citizen were not easily gulled? Teach him to suspect all appeals to his self-interest and passions, teach him to abhor flattery, teach him to despise sham-glory and to know what constitutes true success, and you arm him against the wiles of any Louis Napoleon.

I see nothing for it, then, if we hope to reform the morals of States, but to educate and reform the individual members of the State. If we would forge a strong chain, we must make every link strong. Neglect of the individual has been the weakness of every social and political panacea concocted by Utopian theorists during the past century; they are all engaged in the hopeless task of making the chain before they have made the links, of building a perfect edifice out of imperfect materials. But in truth this is impossible; although a man exercises only a part of his functions in his relations with the State, yet his conduct in this respect, his performance of a citizen's duty, will depend upon his whole character. A bad man can never be a good citizen. We must start, then, with the individual; we must train him to be honest and unselfish; we must convince him that there are not two moral laws,—one for the citizen and another for the State,—but one single and inflexible law. And we may rely upon it that when the majority of the citizens of a nation have attained to this ethical level, they will choose representatives to make and administer their laws, who will not approve of public murder, or public bullying, or public theft, or public deceit. And as among civilized individuals it is not fear of imprisonment that deters them from laying hands on each other, but a principle more cogent than a hundred policemen, so will it be among civilized states.

Never was there a time when ethical education was more needed than now. The world is emerging from feudalism; governments are being thrown into the hands of all the citi-

zens. Under an autocracy, it was natural that the ordinary man, having no political rights, should feel no civic responsibility; under a limited monarchy, the privileges and responsibility belonged usually to a class; universal suffrage makes every one a citizen and every citizen responsible. But let us not suppose that having adopted the system which establishes civic equality we have nothing more to do; that we can leave it to run itself, as the Thibetan puts his prayer-mill in a stream and goes off about his business. Since every vote is now to be counted, it is of infinite moment that every voter be worth counting, or we shall discover that this system, which gives no more voting value to an Abraham Lincoln than to a boot-black, will hurry us into evils without a parallel in history. The tyranny of raw and brutal and greedy millions would be worse than the tyranny of a Machiavellian prince. Democracy possesses no amulet against Machiavellianism; it offers, on the contrary, new fields in which the devil can sow and harvest. Democracy is the political coming of age of a people; but what individual ever found the temptations of manhood less insistent than those of youth? I have hinted at the manner in which party has become a weapon of Machiavellianism; had I space I could point out many other forms in which the same Spirit of Evil operates in our modern governments.

Regarding the State, therefore, as the sum of its individual members, I believe that its ethical improvement must correspond to theirs. But of course the mass can be elevated much more slowly than any of its parts. Time was when the individual was as selfish and as lawless as States now are; when he took what he could, and kept it till a stronger hand snatched it from him; when every man's house was in very truth a castle, fortified and garrisoned against his neighbor. That time has passed, and just as civilized men have come to understand that they prosper better by being friends than enemies, so will States come to a similar understanding. There is much talk about war being a permanent instinct among nations; not so very long ago individuals held the same belief. The days of dynasties are about over, and dynastic ambition was one of the chief sources of war. Monarchs

and ministers still find their interest in persuading the populations that there are ineradicable causes of hostility between them and their neighbors; they strive, by every means in their power, to encourage such fallacies. They flatter cupidity by setting up commercial barriers,—tariffs which imply that one nation can reap advantage by crippling another's productivity. They would still have the foreigner treated as a foe and his goods as lawful plunder. But all the forces of invention and commerce are against them; and in time the factitious excuses for periodic bloodshed will be unmasked. Unless we misread the portents of history, the era will dawn, however long delayed that dawn may be, when the nations shall recognize their mutual interdependence and live like brothers together.

But let not this vision blind us to the conditions which prevail to-day. We are still at the stage when politicians and philosophers deny that a State has moral obligations, and when nations practice what these preach, that success justifies any crime and that failure is the only unpardonable sin. The best nations to-day have not risen above Ben-Franklinism; if they do not cheat their neighbors it is because they believe that honesty is the best *policy*. Yet even their adherence to Ben-Franklinism is only intermittent, and neither John Bull nor Brother Jonathan can always resist the temptation to drive a sharp bargain, or to bully a weak neighbor. Make the State represent the collective conscience of citizens, the majority of whom are enlightened and honest; judge its acts by the standard by which you judge the individual; abolish the notion that though the parts must be moral the whole may be immoral; restrict corporate impersonality behind which lurks corrupting irresponsibility—and Machiavellianism will be overcome. Overcome, I say, but not destroyed; for as long as mankind exist they will be engaged in the cosmic struggle between the forces of growth and the forces of decay, between good and evil, between selfishness and unselfishness; and never will they achieve a victory when they can say, "Henceforth we need struggle no more." At each successive advance the difficulties become more complex,—a more subtle

Machiavellianism is personified in Metternich than in Borgia, —but the principles which lead to the triumph of righteousness do not vary in essence. It was inevitable that a mongrel and materialized Christianity, teaching a system of rewards and punishments dependent on anything but conduct and character, setting up a local and material Hell and Heaven, and in all ways turning the morals of individuals topsy-turvy, should have caused equal confusion in regard to the morals of States. It is the duty of all men who perceive that the moral laws derive their authority not from the fact that they were uttered by this or that good man in Judea, but from the fact that they are true and universally applicable; it is their duty to sweep away that old falsehood that rulers and governments are absolved from paying heed to those ethical principles to which every individual is bound. But before any State can have a conscience and obey it—and consider how long it was before any individual had a conscience—the members of the State must be moral.

WILLIAM R. THAYER.

ON THE FOUNDING OF A NEW RELIGION.

It is astonishing to see how much is written nowadays on the above subject. We say astonishing because the proposition involved is, strictly speaking, in direct contradiction to the increasing progress of science. However completely a man may have departed from religious belief, he cannot but be profoundly touched—in proportion as his heart is filled with love for humanity—by the spectacle of so many persons to whom Christianity no longer offers a consolation; but who, instead of being content with a system of pure ethics, continue to seek a new guiding star to direct their lives. Such a phenomenon is full of significance to every one who recognizes that the “greatest happiness of the greatest number” is the highest aim of civilization; and this phenomenon is the more worthy of consideration from the fact